

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-06 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 INR-10 CIAE-00

NSAE-00 PPT-01 /025 W

----- 083479

R 100904Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7978

INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB UNN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, YO (AZEMI, AJET)

SUBJ: AMCIT CALLED FOR YUGOSLAV MILITARY SERVICE

REF : BELGRADE 5225

1. SUMMARY: YUGO OFFICIALS GIVE MORE DETAILS ON AZEMI, BUT NONE HELPFUL. IN SHORT, AZEMI PRESENTLY IN SERVICE, WITH ONLY REMOTE POSSIBILITY FOR EARLY RELEASE. END SUMMARY.

2. ON DEC 3, EMBOFF CALLED BATAVELJIC TO REMIND HIM OF PROMISE FOR FURTHER DETAILS ON AZEMI. WHEN BATAVELJIC SAID HE STILL UNABLE GET REPORT FROM MACEDONIAN AUTHORITIES, EMBOFF POINTED OUT IN EXASPERATION IT IS INCREDIBLE THAT FSFA UNABLE, AFTER MORE THAN TWO MONTHS OF INQUIRY, TO GET OFFICIAL REPORT. BATAVELJIC COUNTERED THAT WE MAY CONSIDER OFFICIAL REPORT THAT AZEMI INDUCTED ON NOV 12, TO SERVE 15 MONTHS IN YUGOSLAV MILITARY. HE HAD HOPED HIS "PRIVATE" TELEPHONE INQUIRIES MIGHT ENCOURAGE AUTHORITIES IN MACEDONIA TO RELEASE AZEMI EARLIER, BUT SO FAR HE HAD NOT SUCCEEDED.

3. ON DEC 5, EMBOFF MET WITH BATAVELJIC TO AGAIN DISCUSS AZEMI'S PLIGHT. SAME GROUND WAS COVERED AS BEFORE WITH FOLLOWING NEW DETAILS:

(A) BATAVELJIC SAID IT INCONCEIVABLE THAT YUGO CONOFF IN NYC
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COULD HAVE ASSURED AZEMI THAT HE WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEMS DEPARTING

YUGOSLAVIA, SINCE YUGO CONOFFS UNDER STRICT INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO ADVISE SUCH INQUIRIES EITHER TO VISIT OR NOT TO VISIT THEIR HOMELAND. INQUIRERS ARE SUPPOSEDLY INFORMED OF THEIR MILITARY OBLIGATION, WHICH THEY MUST "REGULATE", I.E., EITHER SERVE IN YUGOSLAV FORCES, OR APPLY FOR APPROPRIATE EXEMPTION. IN AZEMI'S CASE, EXEMPTION WOULD HAVE BEEN GRANTED ONLY IF HE HAD PERMISSION FROM GOY FOR "STALNI BORAVAK" (PERMANENT STAY) ABROAD -- BATAVELJIC DOUBTS THAT AZEMI HAS SUCH STATUS.

(B) SICE AZEMI WAS FIRST AMCIT IN RECENT MEMORY WHO HAS BEEN REQUIRED TO SERVE IN YUGO FORCES, EMBOFF ASKED WHETHER THERE ANY SIGNIFICANCE FOR U.S. YUGOSLAV RELATIONS TO BE READ INTO AZEMI'S INDUCTION? BATAVELJIC SAID, AS FAR AS HE KNOWS, WE SHOULD NOT RPT NOT INTERPRET AZEMI'S INDUCTION AS HAVING ANY SPECIAL MEANING IN BILATERAL RELATIONS. HE REMINDED OF MANY DUAL NATIONAL FROM CANADA AND AUSTRALIA WHO HAVE SERVED, AND ADDED THAT, AS A GENERAL POLICY MATTER, IN LAST YEAR OR SO, OBLIGATIONS OF YUGOSLAV CITIZENS ABROAD (ESPECIALLY MILITARY SERVICE) WERE BEING ENFORCED MORE STRICTLY.

(C) BATAVELJIC CLAIMS AZEMI DID NOT AVAIL HIMSELF OF DEFERMENT PROCEDURE WHICH AFFORDED ALL INDUCTEES WITHIN 8 DAYS OF NOTIFICATION. EMBOFF AT LOSS TO EXPLAIN THIS SINCE THIS WAS MAIN ADVICE GIVEN AZEMI.

(D) ACCORDING YUGOSLAV MILITARY SECURITY REGULATIONS, AZEMI NOT ALLOWED COMMUNICATE WITH EMBASSY HIS SERVICE.

(E) FSFA WILL REQUEST MACEDONIAN AUTHORITIES TO RETURN AZEMI'S AMERICAN PASSPORT TO EMBASSY FOR SAFEKEEPING.

(F) IN PRINCIPLE, AZEMI SHOULD BE ABLE TO DEPART YUGOSLAVIA AFTER COMPLETING MILITARY SERVICE; HOWEVER, WILL PROBABLY BE REQUIRED TO DO SO ON YUGOSLAV PASSPORT.

(G) BATAVELJIC SAID NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT AZEMI MIGHT GET RELEASED EARLIER -- "HE COULD HAVE A HEART ATTACK, OR BREAK HIS BACK". EMBOFF EXPRESSED HOPE AZEMI WOULD NOT BE SO LICKY.

COMMENT: IF IT WES NOT OBVIOUS BEFORE, LITTLE DOUBT REMAINS THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FSFA CONSULAR OFFICIALS, INCLUDING OLD FRIEND BATAVELJIC,*NOT VERY SYMPATHETIC TO AZEMI, AND DISINCLINED EXTEND THEM* LVES IN HIS BEHALF. THUS, WHILE WE INTEND KEEP REMINDING THEM OUR HOPE FOR AZEMI'S EARLY RELEASE, IT LIKELY HE WILL BE RETURNING HOME UNTIL HIS OBLIGATION FULFILLED. SINCE EMBASSY UNABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH AZEMI DIRECTLY, SUGGEST DEPARTMENT ADVISE AZEMI'S BROTHER, THROUGH CONG GLOVER'S OFFICE, THAT BEST ADVICE SEEMS TO BE TO SERVE OBLIGATION ON BEST BEHAVIOR, KEEPING EYES OPEN FOR

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EARLY RELEASE. MAY ALSO BE HELPFUL INFORM
BROTHER THAT AZEMI'S INVOLUNTARY SERVICE IN YUGO FORCES IN NO
WAY ENDANGERS HIS AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP.
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